THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) to (c) Pawan Hans Limited entered into an agreement with M|s Westland Helicopters of UK, for purchase of 21 Westland helicopters at a cost of Pound 65 million. The entire cost of Pound 65 million was covered under an outright grant given by British Government under D.D.A. Grant. The manufacturers also paid a onetime lumsum operation subsidy of Pound 10 million for purchase of six spare engines and accessories.

As a result of problems faced during operational performance, the entire fleet of Westland helicopters was finally grounded on 9-2-91 for reasons of operational safety and economic viability.

The total maintenance cost incurred to date is Rs. 34.9 crores.

(d) A report of the Committee constituted to examine various aspects of the purchase deal is available in Parliament Library with S. No. 358-418 R. The Committee report does not call for disciplinary action against any official.

(e) Earlier, it had been decided to dispose the entire fleet through global tenders but since no bids were received by the prescribd date, it has now been decided to dispose these helicopters through negotiations with parties interest in purchase of these helicopters and accessories.

Air India flight from New Delhi to Frankfurt

368. DR. BAPU KALDATE: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) the total Air India flights from New Delhi to Frankfurt and back during April, 1994;

(b) the total number of passengers carried by Air India both ways stating the percentage of shortfall in the capacity utilisation; and

(c) what are the reasons for the shortfall in the passenger traffic on Air India on this route?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) and (b) During April, 1994 Air India operated 52 flights on the India|Frankfurt|India sector and carried 6522 passengers. The capacity utilisation during the month was 35 per cent against the target of average capacity utilisation of 63.2 per cent.

(c) The reasons for shortfall in capacity utilisation are :

(i) traffic is usually low during the month of April;

(ii) competition by foreign Carriers.

Selling of Tickets at Discount by Foreign Airlines

369. SHRI GHUFRAN AZAM: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that foreign airlines operating from India are selling tickets at discount rates without the prior approval of the DGCA;

(b) if so, the number of such cases that came to the notice of Government during the past 6 months;

(c) whether Government propose to contemplate any strict action in this regard;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the impact of such concessional offer by foreign airlines on our airlines?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) to (e) In June, 1994, The Board of Airline Representatives of India represented to DGCA that some foreign airlines operating from India particularly the European carriers